

4/8

THE
Behaviour, Confession, and Execution
OF THE
Twelve Prisoners

THAT
Suffered on *Wednesday*, the 22^d of *Jan.* 67 ^{$\frac{8}{9}$} .

VIZ.,

Robert Freeman { Drawn and Hang'd in *Little-Britain*,
for Murdering his late Master there.

At **T T B U R N**,

George Brown,
John Butler,
Richard Mills,
Christ. Bruncker,
George Kenian, { For a Burglary and Felony in *Hatton-*
Garden, taking away 380 Ounces of
Plate, besides Rings and Money, un-
der pretence of searching for Papists.

William Brain, { For stealing an Horse, Having been
burnt in the hand before.

Timothy Smith,
and
Margaret Wells, { For a Burglary and Felony in *St.*
Gileses.

Will. Atkinson,
and
William Tiney, { For a Burglary and Felony in *White-*
chappel.

Francis Jones, } For a Felony and Burglary.

Giving a true Account of

Their deportment in Prison after Sentence, and last
Words, as far as material, at Execution.

Attested by Mr. Ordinary.

L I C E N S E D, Printed for C. L. in the year, 1679.

Twelve prisoners

*The Behaviour, Confession, and Execution of
the Twelve Prisoners, that suffer'd on Wed-
nesday the 22^d of January, 167⁸, &c.*

AS this Sheet is made publick, as a Sea-
mark to all that read or hear it, that they
may avoid those fatal Rocks of sin, on
which these unhappy persons lamen-
tably Shipwrackt : So particular circum-
spection has been used, that nothing but Truth may
herein be related, so as neither to abuse the dead, or
mis-inform the living.

At the last Sessions there were in all 17 persons, *viz.*
15 Men and 2 Women that received Sentence of death,
but 5 of them obtained (at least for the present) His
Majesties Gracious Reprieve ; the other 12, this 22^d
of *January* were brought to Execution. The first
was *Robert Freeman*, an Apprentice to one *Mr. Bailey*
in *Little-Britain* ; for Murdering whom, on the 12th
instant he was condemned, and now came to suffer.
'Tis strange, and sad to consider, that not only at his
Tryal, but afterwards, he persisted in asserting his in-
nocence, notwithstanding all the Arguments and Im-
portunities *Mr. Ordinary*, or other Ministers could use,
who took extraordinary pains in that behalf ; yet con-
fessed the sum of all that was evidenced against him :
As that he said, O do not speak of that Gun, or words

to that effect, That there might be Blood on the Gun
 &c. That he did speak to have his Masters House and
 Shop, and Custom, that very forenoon, But averred
 that the Door, when he came down in the morning,
 was not lock'd, but only latch'd, and the Key on the
 inside. He discoursed very understandingly, and
 made Solemn Appeals of his ignorance, how, or by
 what means his Master came to his end; but the cir-
 cumstances at his Tryal were home and undeniable.

Mr. *Ordinary* on the Lords day, took great pains
 to awaken them all to a through Conviction of their
 great Sins, from two remarkable and most suitable
 Scriptures, viz, in the forenoon, *Rom. 3. 19, For we
 know that what the Law saith, it saith to them that are
 under the Law; that every mouth may be stoppt, and all
 the World become guilty before God.* In the afternoon,
 from, *Psalms. 25, 11, For thy names sake O Lord!
 Pardon my Iniquity, for it is great.* And after the
 evening Sermon, Inquired what Impressions of Gods
 Spirit they found on their hearts from his Ministerial
 labours that day; to which they answered, that they
 hoped the Lord would make it effectual to them.

On the Monday likewise Mr. *Ordinary* visited them,
 and on the Tuesday they being call'd together into
 the great Hall, he and two other Ministers came to
 exhort and pray with them, in order, to fit and prepare
 them for their great and dreadful change. At first
 many of them appeared very earnest to have the Sa-
 crament of the Lords-Supper Administred to them,
 Whereupon Mr. *Ordinary* and another able Minister
 opening the Nature of that Ordinance, their unpre-
 paredness,

paredness, scandalousness, &c. Used most effectual Arguments, why it was neither necessary, or convenient for them under their Circumstances, yet without declaring their tenderness in no wise to debar them of any thing that might be necessary or expedient for their Salvation; so that after above half an hours pains, the Prisoners in General declared that they were satisfied and did not desire it: after this, a worthy Minister gave them serious advice, and prayed very earnestly for them, which being performed, Mr. Ordinary (as his usual manner is) did require a particular account from every one of them, what hope they had (after all Counsel and Prayers) of their future happy estate; whereunto each severally answered, confessing and bewailing their precedent Ill course of Life, which might provoke the Lord to leave them to themselves, to fall into those crimes for which they were now to suffer; some in particular mentioning their profanation of the Lords day, disobedience to Parents, Drunkenness, mixing with bad Company, the sin of Swearing and other vices of the Tongue; one declared, that he had for two years last prayed earnestly to the Lord to be preserved from the temptations of his loose Companions; but not setting a sufficient watch over his own heart, he was not fortified against the said temptations. Another alledged that being in great wants, and having overtures made of supplying himself by invading the proprieties of other men, he was over-perswaded to join with them in such an attempt. Mr. Ordinary, after all these confessions, earnestly pressed them to search into their hearts, which were naturally so deceitful,

ful, that they might not presume upon a false Faith and Repentance. And then another Minister concluded for that time with Prayer.

On Wednesday morning about eight a Clock, *Robert Freeman* was drawn on a Sledge (as is usual in cases of Petty-Treason) to *Little-Britain*, where just by the Grate was a Gibbet erected: He passed with a solid composed countenance, Reading all the way; and being brought thither, persisted in denying the Fact, with several solemn expressions, too tedious to be here related: he repeated the Lords-Prayer with much appearance of zeal, as likewise the Creed, declaring it to be the Articles of his Souls belief. Mr. Ordinary prayed with him very affectionately, and also he prayed himself in good words: he desired all young Men to beware of ill-company, and private sins, lest God should give them up to the like disastrous end: he expressed largely the love he had to his Master, and that he was not privy to, or conscious of any others that might be concerned in his Murder; but that for his own part, he freely forgave all the World, whatever thoughts it might have of him when he was dead; for he trusted he had made his peace with God: and so was Executed, most people with sorrow admiring at, and pitying his obstinacy; for so we cannot but call his denial, after such convincing Evidence. Nor want there examples heretofore of the like resoluteness under the greatest Guilt, in Malefactors, that out of hopes of Pardon at last, or vain-glory to dye purged, have stiffed their Consciences, and died with a denial of the Facts, which even before they confessed to Mr. Ordinary. But we dare not censure in so

abstruse a matter; himself could not deny, but the Witnesses, Court and Jury had proceeded fairly: for Men can but act as things appear; therefore we leave him to the judgment of that most just and all-seeing God, who righteously judgeth all the Earth.

The same forenoon, in four Carts were the other Eleven conveyed to Tyburn, who when they were all tyed up to the Beam, declared to Mr. Ordinary, and another Minister, those particular sins, which they did shame themselves for, as the just provocation of God, why he suffered them to fall into those foul Crimes, for which they now dyed.

One of the five for the Burglary in *Hatton Garden*, delivered a paper of his Confession, under his own hand, which he desired might be published, as some evidence of his sorrow and Repentance to the World, the words of which are as follows.

The first eminent sin which I can remember, was the Breach of the Sabbath; then I proceeded to keep Company, where I learned to Curse and Swear, and profane Gods Holy Name; Lying and Adultery, Drunkenness, and Disobedience to my Mother, who sought by good Counsel to reclaim me; which is the just cause my days are shortened in this World. I have been guilty of a great many Robberies on the Highway, and others besides this I am so justly Condemned for.

Another of the five confessed, that he was guilty of all manner of sin, (that of actual Murder and Treason excepted) and was much humbled for the same, especially for his execrable Oaths and Curses, which had been the customary Parenthesis of his discourses.

They

They all acknowledged, that the hand of the Lord had righteously brought their Iniquities to light, and themselves to shame; they had deserved to be eternally rejected, for several other notorious unknown Impieties, but they hoped for the pardon of them, by the Merits of Christ, upon their Repentance, which his charity apprehended to have been sincere: they all prayed for themselves, and some very pathetically, and beyond expectation. They desired Mr. Dr. Smith to say their words, which would not be heard so well in their own pronounciation, by reason of the Multitude of Spectators, that he would warn all present, by their calamitous end, to take heed of all sin.

The Woman in the Morning, on some temptation, disown'd that she was guilty of the Burglary for which she suffered; but at the place of Execution freely Confessed it; and desired pardon of God for that Life in particular.

It was a sad and most affecting Spectacle, to see so many persons at once, basting themselves to an ignominious Death, by the Impieties of their Lives: to behold such a sight, one would think, might awaken all that saw it, to fly from such wicked Practises, to leave off their debauched Conversation and bad Company, and seriously imploring Mercy and forgiveness for past Iniquities, strenuously endeavour to redeem the time for the future, and lead their Lives in Sobriety and Godliness, when God of his infinite goodness grants.

F. I. N. I. S.

Ascribed to the Rev. Mr. Samuel Smith, who was the Author of this Narrative.

I Do attest the particulars of this Narrative to be true,
 SAMUEL SMITH
 Ordinary of Newgate.

